

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9670

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WARSAW 0748

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PL, UR

SUBJECT: POLISH CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES; ECONOMIC TENSIONS AND RFE

REF: WARSAW 525, 75. WARSAW 8162

1. SUMMARY. A ZNAK DEPUTY WHO DISCUSSED THE STATE OF PLAY ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROCESS WITH US ON FEBRUARY 4 CLAIMED THAT THE REGIME HAS NOW YIELDED SUBSTANTIALLY ON EVERY POINT OF IMPORTANCE TO THE POLISH EPISCOPATE. HE CLAIMED THAT RFE FAVORITISM IS COMPLICATING THE SITUATION FOR ZNAK WHICH MUST WORK OUT A COMMON STAND WHEN THE AMENDMENTS COME TO A VOTE AT A SEJM SESSION SET FOR FEBRUARY 10. THE DEPUTY APPEALED FOR TRUTHFULNESS AND RESPONSIBILITY IN RFE BROADCASTING. END SUMMARY

2. ZNAK DEPUTY ZABLOCKI (PROTEC ABSOLUTELY) INVITED AN EMBASSY OFFICER TO LUNCH ON FEBRUARY 4 AND PROVIDED A DETAILED RUN-DOWN OF THE CHURCH/ZNAK-REGIME BARGAINING ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES. ZABLOCKI SAID THE REGIME HAS YIELDED SUBSTANTIALLY ON VIRTUALLY EVERY ISSUE. HE HAD JUST LEARNED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT
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THE REGIME HAS WITHDRAWN THE FORMULATION ABOUT CITIZENS'

RIGHTS BEING DEPENDENT ON FULFILLMENT OF OBLIGATIONS. THIS PROPOSED LANGUAGE WILL NOW BE TO THE EFFECT THAT EVERY CITIZEN IS EXPECTED TO DO HIS DUTY, A FULLY ACCEPTABLE STATEMENT (WARSAW 525). CONCERNING THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY, HE MADE THE POINT THAT THE PHRASING HAS BEEN LIMITED TO AVOID A SUGGESTION OF AUTHORITY OVER WORLD OUTLOOK, ADDING THAT THIS FORMULATION IS NARROWER THAN THE SIMILAR CLAUSES IN OTHER COMMUNIST CONSTITUTIONS. REGARDING THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE, ZNAK AND THE CHURCH WERE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT A STATEMENT THAT WOULD LIMIT POLAND'S SOVEREIGNTY BY DECLARING THAT IT "BELONGS" TO THE SOCIALIST COMMUNITY, AND THIS ITEM HAS ALSO BEEN ALTERED SATISFACTORILY TO ELIMINATE THE ELEMENT OF SUPRANATIONAL ALLEGIANCE. FINALLY, ZABLOCKI SAID THERE MAY BE A PHRASE ADDED IN THE SECTION CONCERNING THE FRONT NATIONAL UNITY THAT WOULD REINFORCE THE POSITION OF ZNAK AND THE FAITHFUL. MOREOVER, PREVIOUS CLAUSES MAKE IN MISUSE OF RELIGION A CRIME WILL BE ELIMINATED.

3. THUS, ZABLOCKI ASSERTED, THE CHURCH HAS WON ON VIRTUALLY ALL POINTS OF IMPORTANCE. ASKED IF HE FEELS THE NET RESULT IS POSITIVE COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS CONSTITUTION, HE WAFFLED. HOWEVER, HE SAID THE NEED (DOMESTIC AND SOVIET) TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION HAD BEEN GREAT. GIVEN THIS, THE CHURCH HAS MADE OUT VERY WELL. AT ONE POINT, ZABLOCKI WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT THE EPISCOPATE HAD "JOINTLY EDITED" THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

4. ZABLOCKI LAUDED FIRST SECRETARY GIEREK'S FLEXIBILITY AND SENSITIVITY TO THE PUBLIC MOOD, AS WELL AS HIS PATRIOTISM AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO DEFEND POLAND'S "SPECYFIKA." ZABLOCKI CONTENDED THAT THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE WILL STRENGTHEN POLAND'S SINGULARITIES WITHIN SOCIALISM, E.G., THE CHURCH, PRIVATE AGRICULTURE, HE ALSO CREDITED ZNAK DEPUTY KONSTANTY LUBIENSKI, A MEMBER OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE COMMISSION, WITH A KEY, GO BETWEEN ROEL. HE SAID THE LAST OF THE CARDINAL'S THREE SPECIAL SERMONS, DELIVERED ON JANUARY 25, HAD BEEN CONCILIATORY, EVEN CALLING FOR CALM, IN RECOGNITION OF THE REGIME'S COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE. CONFIDENTIAL

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5. ZABLOCKI MADE A REPEATED AND POINTED APPEAL TO STRAIGHTEN OUT RFE ON SEVERAL POINTS. HE CLAIMED ITS BROADCASTS ABOUT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES HAVE BEEN TENDENTIOUS, ONE-SIDED, AND IRRESPONSIBLE. ASIDE FROM DISTORTING THE TRUTH, HURTING HIM PERSONALLY, AND EXACERBATING ZNAK'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS, HE SUGGESTED THAT THIS APPROACH COULD CAUSE SERIOUS LONG-TERM DAMAGE. HE

RECALLED THE 1956 HUNGARIAN CASE TO MAKE THIS POINT. SPECIFICALLY, HE SAID THAT RFE HAS BEEN SAYING THAT THE "KRAKOW WING" OF ZNAK, LED BY ZNAK CHAIRMAN STANISLAW STOMMAN AND INCLUDING TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY, AND MANY OF THE 59 PETITIONERS, HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE EPISCOPATE, WHILE LUBIENSKI (AND ZABLOCKI) HAVE TAKEN A CAUTIOUS STAND, APART FROM THE CHURCH. ZABLOCKI CLAIMED AND MADE A GOOD CASE OF IT, THAT THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE. HE ASSERTED THAT THE KRAKOW GROUP, WHICH HE REPEATEDLY CALLED THE "EXTREMIST WING" OF ZNAK, REFERRING TO THEM ONCE AS "LIBERAL REVISIONISTS," HAS BECOME ISOLATED AND UNHELPFUL FOLLOWING THE INITIAL PETITION ON DECEMBER 5 (75 WARSAW 8162). HE CREDITED THAT PETITION, PLUS THE EPISCOPATE'S JANUARY 9 MEMORANDUM, WITH HAVING PROVIDED THE MAIN IMPETUS IN BRINGING THE RIGHT KIND OF PRESSURE ON THE REGIME. SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, THE ADDITIONAL PETITIONS OF THE "EXTREMISTS" BECAME INCREASINGLY UNHELPFUL, WEAKLY FORMULATED, AND AFTER-THE FACT. HE ARGUED THAT RFE HAS COMPLETELY REVERSED THE TRUE SITUATION AND SUGGESTED THAT HSI IS BECAUSE IT HAS CONTACT ONLY WITH THE ZNAK "EXTREMISTS." ZABLOCKI PLEADED THAT HIS HANDS ARE TIED SINCE HE HAS NO PUBLIC OUTLET, AND HE OPENLY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. HOWEVER, HE ASKED THAT HIS OWN CONFIDENTIALITY BE STRICTLY RESPECTED.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 WARSAW 0748

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6. ZNAK HAS NOT YET SORTED INSELF OUT ON THE QUESTION OF HOW TO VOTE. THE SEJM WILL MEET TO APPROVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ON FEBRUARY 10. ZABLOCKI OPINED THAT THE REGIME WANTS THE PROCESS COMPLETED BEFORE THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS. THE AGENDA AND POSSIBLY THE SPEAKERS WERE TO BE SELECTED ON FEBRUARY 5, WHEN SEJM MARSHAL GUCWA MET WITH THE SEJM LEADERS. ZNAK HAS LITTLE TIME TO HAMMER OUT A COMMON POSITION, AND ZABLOCKI EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THIS. HE FEELS ZNAK SHOULD VOTE FOR THE CHANGES WITH THE STATED RESERVATION THAT THE CONSTITUTION NEEDS FURTHER IMPROVEMENT. HE SAID THAT, AS THINGS STAND NOW, THE ZNAK "EXTREMISTS" WOULD VOTE NO. HOWEVER, ZABLOCKI FEELS THAT ZNAK MUST MAINTAIN A UNIFIED POSITION ON THIS ISSUE FOR ITS OWN SELF-PRESERVATION. FAILURE TO DO SO COULD JEOPARDIZE ITS FUTURE USEFULNESS, AND WOULD CERTAINLY AFFECT ZABLOCKI'S OWN DECISION WHETHER TO RUN IN THE SEJM ELECTIONS NEXT MONTH. ANOTHER FACTOR IN HIS DECISION IS THE CARDINAL. ZABLOCKI FEELS HE HAS ALWAYS HAD THE CARDINAL'S APPROVAL, AND HE WILL WANT A SPECIFIC SIGN FROM THE PRIMATE BEFORE HE DECIDES TO RUN AGAIN. ZABLOCKI SAID THIS WITH FEELING, AND HE SEEMS TO IMPLY THAT RFE'S DISTORTIONS AFFECT HIM MOST KEENLY WHERE THEY RELATE TO HIS STANDING WITH CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI.

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7. ASKED HIS VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, ZABLOCKI EXPRESSED CONCERN. PRICES MUST GO UP, AND THE PEOPLE MUST UNDERSTAND THIS. HOWEVER, POPULAR TENSIONS ARE AGAIN INCREASING, AND THE SITUATION IS FRAUGHT WITH POTENTIAL DANGER. ZABLOCKI VOICED A FEAR THAT A PUBLIC OUTBURST MIGHT BRING "FOREIGN INTERVENTION," WHICH WOULD WIPE AWAY ALL THE "GAINS" OF THE PAST FEW YEARS. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE AGAIN REFERRED TO RFE, SAYING THAT THE LAST THING THAT IS NEEDED IS FOR ANYONE TO PLAY UPON THESE DANGERS AND EXACERBATE THEM. ZABLOCKI HIMSELF ADMITTED TO BEING "MODERATE" AND WANTING TO PRESERVE ACHIEVED GAINS, PRESSING ONLY CAREFULLY FOR FURTHER ADVANCES. HE REJECTED THE PETITIONERS' DEMAND FOR THE RIGHT TO STRIKE, FOR EXAMPLE, AS TOTALLY UNREALISTIC AND POSSIBLY DANGEROUS IN THAT SUCH ACTIONS EXCEED THE TACITLY-ACCEPTED LIMITS IN DEALING WITH THE REGIME. HE ARGUED THAT THE EXTREMISTS' TENDENCY TO REJECT ANY POSSIBILITY OF BARGAINING WITH THE REGIME IS TANTAMOUNT TO LEAVING THE FIELD OPEN TO "OTHERS," BY WHICH HE PRESUMABLY MEANT THE REGIME-ORIENTED PAX GROUP.

8. COMMENT: WE HAVE NOT HEARD NOR YET READ THE SCRIPTS

CITED BY ZABLOCKI, BUT WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THE VALIDITY OF HIS STATEMENTS. THIS WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TIME THAT RFE HAS DESCRIBED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ZNAK PERSONALITIES IN TERMS WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS FAVORING SOME OVER OTHERS. THE ZNAK GROUP IS UNIQUE IN EASTERN EUROPE -- AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL GROUPING OF CATHOLIC INTELLECTUALS IN THE PARLIAMENT OF A COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED COUNTRY WHICH NOT ONLY HAS A SYMBOLIC VALUE AS A SORT OF OPPOSITION IN BEING, BUT ALSO CONTRIBUTES EFFECTIVELY IN SOME SITUATIONS TO THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.

9. EMOTIONS CONTINUE TO RUN HIGH IN POLAND OVER THREATENED PRICE INCREASES; THERE IS A HEATED NATIONAL DEBATE OVER POSSIBLE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES; AND THERE SHORTLY WILL BE ELECTIONS FOR THE SEJM, ELECTIONS WHICH COULD POSSIBLY SEE ZNAK DISAPPEAR AS ONE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS STAND ON SOME OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL

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CHANGES. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN THE FOREIGN-POLICY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR RFE TO BE ANYTHING BUT STRICTLY OBJECTIVE AND EVEN-HANDED IN DESCRIBING THE PROSPECT OF PRICE INCREASES AS WELL AS THE DEBATE OVER POSSIBLE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM. IF THE POLISH AUTHORITIES ARE BACKING AWAY FROM THEIR EXTREME FORMULATIONS IN THE FACE OF CHURCH AND OTHER PRESSURES (AND WE HAVE RECEIVED AUTHORITATIVE INDICATIONS EVEN FROM HIGH CHURCH OFFICIALS THAT THIS IS THE CAST) IT IS HIGHLY IMPORTANT THAT RFE USE THE UTMOST RESTRAINT NOW AND IN THE FUTURE IN HANDLING THE SUBJECT. CERTAINLY, NO FORCE OF MODERATION SHOULD BE SINGLED OUT, NEITHER CHURCH, ZNAK, NOR INDIVIDUAL, LEST THERE BE UNNECESSARY REPERCUSSIONS. THE VICTORY OF THE FORCES OF MODERATION WILL BE THERE FOR ALL TO APPRECIATE AND WILL PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT AND EXAMPLE FOR THE FUTURE.

10. RFE MUST CONTINUE TO BE AS CAREFUL AS POSSIBLE IN ITS REPORTING AND COMMENTARY ON SUBJECTS WHICH COULD BE INFLAMMATORY GIVEN THE VOLATILE MOOD OF THE POLISH POPULATION; IT MUST NOT EXACERBATE TENSIONS. US POLICY TOWARDS POLAND, CLEARED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT, ENCOURAGES DOMESTIC CHANGE IN POLAND, BUT NOT AT A PACE WHICH WOULD LEAD TO POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND SOVIET INTERVENTION.

11. CAUTION: PLEASE DO NOT TRANSMIT THE TEXT OF THIS TELEGRAM VERBATIM TO MUNICH, AS WAS DONE WITH WARSAW 594. I HAVE NO STRONG OBJECTION TO THE WAY IN WHICH WARSAW 594 WAS

HANDLED, ALTHOUGH I HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN APPROACH IN WHICH, IN EFFECT, THE DEPARTMENT STANDS ASIDE AND DOES NOT TAKE A POSITION. (THIS LEADS TO FINGERS BEING POINTED AT THE EMBASSY AS A SELF-INTERESTED AGENT OF APPEASEMENT OF THE WARSAW AUTHORITIES.) IN THE PRESENT CASE, SUCH A PROCEDURE WOULD, I FEAR, INEVITABLY RESULT IN THE FINGERING OF ZABLOCKI AND LUBIENSKI AS "PRO-REGIME." I CANNOT DETERMINE FROM HERE HOW THIS MATTER SHOULD BE HANDLED. BIB MIGHT BE CONSULTED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ISSUING GUIDELINES CALLING FOR OBJECTIVITY AND THE AVOIDANCE OF PARTISANSHIP. CONFIDENTIAL

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IF THESE ARE SUFFICIENTLY STRONGLY WRITTEN, WE CAN THEN APPLY THE SAME SORT OF POST-FACTUM CRITICISM OF SCRIPTS AS WE DID IN WARSAW 594. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, SUCH A PROCEDURE WILL NOT PREVENT THE BROADCASTING IN THE FIRST INSTANCE OF PARTISAN MATTER. DAVIES

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